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## BOOK REVIEWS.

THE HEART OF THE EMPIRE. Nine Essays by Different Authors.  
London: Fisher Unwin, 1901.

That a volume of 415 pages containing nine separate essays by Cambridge men on various importunate social questions of the moment should, in spite of the almost universal frigidity of the press, have aroused considerable sympathy and attention is matter for congratulation. Most of the authors, if not all, are presumably young men, and the surprising excellence of the bulk of their work will bring comfort to those who may have fancied that a resolute and practical Liberalism, enthusiastic without sentimentality and combative without fanaticism, was a spirit existing no longer in the land. The writers, although considerable divergencies of temperament are unavoidably noticeable, start from a common standpoint of profound discontent with the existing state of things coupled with an earnest desire to discover practical remedies. Not that they have attempted to face each and all of the diseases of modern society. They have, perhaps wisely, narrowed the field and concentrated their energies on some of the most obviously alarming, all, it would seem, propounding to themselves the question, What are we going to do in view of the growth of giant cities on a scale hitherto unprecedented in the history of the world and the resulting fact that a new species of man, the city type, is being developed? Accordingly the book consists of discussions from various points of view of some of the problems raised by the condition of the poorer population of our great cities in general and London in particular, together with a paper on imperialism as "a natural pendant" (p. 9). Some account of each of the essays thus separated in form but linked in spirit may be useful.

It was perhaps, to begin with, a little unfortunate that the *pas* should have been given to Mr. C. F. G. Masterman's rather lengthy paper entitled, *Realities at Home*. It is difficult to avoid a suspicion that as a result of this arrangement many reviewers as well as the general public, arrived at the end of Mr. Masterman's essay, must have shut the book and "read no further therein" either that day or any other. Presumably the idea was to open with a statement of the case. But in a statement of the case greater brevity and clearness would have been desirable;

and although it is in a way impressive from the writer's evidently extensive personal knowledge of the miserable districts which he describes, the impression is spoiled by bad style and an apparently ungovernable tendency towards crescendoes of sacerdotal rhetoric. Criticism of style may seem out of place where the flame of enthusiasm against evil burns with so powerful if smoky a flame. But the writer brings it upon his own head who, abandoning simple description and statement, is eloquent about "the denizens of dull streets," "the massed multitudes" and "packed populations" of London; who invariably speaks of the meaner quarters of the town as "the Ghetto"; who sprinkles the word "aggregation" an unnecessarily large number of times over the same page; and who finally has the heart to conclude on the following note:—"But if the cry 'Back to the Christ,' which so many observers note as a manifest sign of the coming years, be but the herald of a deep and earnest attempt of the Churches to realize once again the life and the teaching of their Master, then to the anxious watcher the night may indeed be far spent—dawn be nigh at hand" (p. 51 *sq.*). The duty of cavilling under this head will be sufficiently performed by quoting from Mr. Masterman what is beyond doubt the worst sentence in the book. On page 29 he writes: "Literature is symbolized by the penny Sunday paper . . . or the halfpenny hysterical daily with its bastard imperialism and fabulous information—the reading of which, however, being, perhaps fortunately, usually confined to the racing results."

Mr. F. W. Lawrence's admirable essay on *The Housing Problem* can be properly criticized only by the expert who might or might not approve of the conclusions at which he arrives. But to the lay mind it commends itself at once by its thorough information and the robust yet penetrating common-sense with which the author analyzes the amazing fact that under modern conditions the poorest of the population are living on the dearest land, and is fully worthy of the reputation gained for the author by his previous work on "Local Variations in Wages." As it is perhaps the solidest and most striking contribution to the book, a short summary may be acceptable.

Mr. Lawrence divides the problem into the two main heads of rural housing and urban housing, the latter being subdivided into the four problems of the housing of single persons, the housing of families, insanitary areas, and what he calls "the

towniness of towns." The housing of families again falls into three divisions:—the housing of clerks; of artisans and regular laborers; and of the casual laborer. The towniness of towns separates itself into the two evils of overcrowding to the acre and of the moral, physical and æsthetic degradation consequent upon living at a great distance from the country.

The problems of rural housing and of the housing of single persons in towns, not being very complex, are briefly dismissed. Coming to the question of housing families, we find that owing to the house famine in large cities and particularly in London, the families of respectable, not really poor artisans are poorly housed, while the laborer who is merely poor is very poorly housed, the accommodation being regularly a class worse than the means of the people would indicate. The lowest class of all is housed in almost inconceivable foulness with disastrous results to the race. Passing over the figures as to the death-rate of insanitary areas, and Mr. Lawrence's calculation, mysterious to the uninitiated, that the true measure of the towniness of towns is the square root of the population, we reach his very lucid account of the manner in which a town like London grows, "by the addition of successive coats, like those of an onion" (p. 73). As the pressure of business increases, the dwelling-houses at the centre are supplanted by offices and warehouses, so that depopulation ensues, the inner belt first growing, and then, as the outer belt grows, becoming in its turn depopulated. This once understood, it is evident that the really ultimate solution of the housing problem lies in devising some means whereby the growth of suburbs shall be properly organized and regulated. Mr. Lawrence accordingly proposes the creation of a new authority with jurisdiction extending twenty or thirty miles in each direction farther than that of the London County Council. His proposal involves two schemes, which will doubtless arouse much short-sighted opposition; one for taxing the unearned increment, not for general purposes, but to enable the town to grow healthy; and another for the compulsory purchase by the community of agricultural land on the outskirts of large towns. Building schemes such as those of the London County Council do not really strike at the heart of the evil at all. Insanitary areas, when demolished, should be left as open spaces in spite of objections on the ground of expense.

Equally unqualified praise can not be given to Mr. R. A. Bray's

paper on *The Children of the Town*, which deals mainly with the question of education. On the one hand it is impossible to sympathize too cordially with his forcible condemnation of the vulgar theory that the aim of education is to qualify the child to become a successful money-making machine and with his indictment of the class selfishness which looks with suspicion on any measures likely to advance knowledge and restiveness. His remarks again as to the urgent need for reconstruction of the educational organization, with the suggestion that a single educational authority should be established for each district, are practical and acute. Nor can any objection be raised to his sweeping criticism of the already nearly obsolete pupil teacher system; nor to his statesmanlike treatment of the difficult question of Voluntary Schools. But on the other hand there are points of detail, perhaps not essential to his main thesis, which provoke criticism; and at least one fundamental point is open to grave question. To take the less important first, his account of the psychology of the town child as contrasted with that of the country child does not carry conviction. It would of course be impertinent to question the accuracy of the actual observation of one who has had exceptional opportunities for watching the children of the town; nor is it meant to suggest that the town child is not excitable, sharp and quarrelsome, untruthful perhaps—the father, in a word, of the cockney man. But what is fairly open to question is the writer's psychological account of the causes contributing to this result. According to him "a child left to the influence of Nature will acquire a large amount of what may rightly be called knowledge" (p. 119), whereas owing to the continually shifting panorama which passes before him there is no permanent element in the mental attitude of the town child, "nothing that will subject phenomena to its own purposes instead of adapting itself to them" (p. 119). Surely there is no real meaning in this dark saying. The purport which the writer himself appears to attach to it is that the town child does not, owing to his kaleidoscopic environment, connect cause and effect, present and past. It might be contended with some truth that, as far as mental training derived from observation of cause and effect is concerned, there is little to choose between the processes of Nature and a more or less unbroken succession of passing cabs and wagons, and that the knowledge which the child draws from the observation of street life is just as much knowledge as that derived from the

rising and setting of the sun and the interchange of seasons. Of the difference on æsthetic feeling and even on morals there can of course be no question; but the author has fallen into error through failure to draw this important distinction.

Again on p. 136, Mr. Bray, with perfect truth, says "a child is naturally metaphysically inclined." He has arrived at this truth by observation, but unfortunately proceeds from it to unwarrantable deductions. He implies that two things are necessary to the encouragement and confirmation of the child's metaphysical bent; religious training, and the contemplation of Nature. It is at least doubtful whether a country life as such is more favorable to infantile metaphysical tendencies than a city life would be. There must be many who, like the present writer, looking back connect their first vague questionings not with trees and streams and clouds, but rather with some perfectly trivial object, such as a rectangular wooden brick, which, although evidently existing, was the cause of much perplexity by existing in an incomprehensibly different way to oneself. Again one of the commonest movements in the mind of a philosophically inclined child is speculation as to his personal identity—speculation arising at unaccountable moments, half-way upstairs or during a meal, and emphatically not connected with the open-air life of Nature, where all was apt to be lost in the excitement of violent exercise.

As to the influence of religious training, general experience does not support Mr. Bray's opinion that it is favorable to speculation. Much might be said on this subject, but it is enough to point out here that religion, as taught to the child, presents itself in a perfectly definite form, depressing and vexatious indeed, but intelligible. It is painful in the midst of much good sense to find a plea based on Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* for what is called "symbolic education" and explained to be ritual accompanied by incense, lights and music as practised by the Roman Catholics and the High Church party.

These points having no essential connection with Mr. Bray's exposition of our present lack of educational system, nor with his proposals to remedy it, it would have been superfluous to dwell on them at such length, were it not that, apart from their forming a transition to his theory that the teaching of religion is necessary to morality, they are typical of much in the volume. All the authors have observed their facts honestly and carefully, and have conducted their diagnosis and prescribed their remedies in

an equally temperate and scientific spirit. At the same time they have almost all—Mr. Lawrence is a conspicuous exception—slipped at times into vague theoretical generalizations, which, as not affecting in any way the practical value of the work, might well have been curtailed if not omitted. The practical value is very high; and it is cheering that the authors should have avoided on the whole sentimentality in their observation and discussion of facts. That they should have occasionally succumbed in their ultimate analysis is deplorable indeed, but hardly surprising in view of the rarity at all times of minds capable at once of profitable comment on the tangible facts of the world and of really philosophic reflection.

Messrs. Noel Buxton and Walter Hoare collaborate in a very full and interesting paper on *Temperance Reform*. They advocate, after full consideration, certain instalments of experimental legislation into which it is impossible now to enter, and raise, but are far from entirely disposing of a momentous question of principle—that of *laissez faire* as opposed to interference. Meanwhile one minor detail may be noted. They challenge (p. 181) those who sneer at making people “sober by Act of Parliament” to advocate abolition of the Acts which limit free trade in alcohol. But surely it would be no very great inconsistency in an adherent of the *laissez faire* doctrine to acquiesce in the existing Acts, which after all are only mildly paternal, rather than deprive the country of one of its most important sources of revenue.

The theme of Mr. P. W. Wilson's essay on *The Distribution of Industry* is the elaboration of a point touched upon by Mr. Lawrence in connection with the housing problem; namely the tendency for London to become impossible for manufacturers and others who, under the pressure of high rents and wages in the capital, find it profitable to transport their business into the country. What merit the paper possesses in a wealth of lively and various detail is largely counterbalanced by the ill-connected and pointless nature of many of the remarks, as well as by its singularly jocose and jarring tone. It contains however some useful criticisms, written with special railway knowledge, on certain schemes for remedying the evils of the day by improved facilities for transit.

The purpose of Mr. Pigou's article on *Some Aspects of the Problem of Charity* is, in his own words, “to focus some of the things that are already known rather than to break new ground”

(p. 236), and all that can be said is that he has fulfilled his task with efficiency and discretion.

Mr. F. W. Head has furnished a remarkable paper on *The Church and the People*, which may stand next to Mr. Lawrence's in point of solid value. Its impressiveness lies in the fact that the author is confessedly (p. 306) a Churchman and therefore presumably a Christian. So forcible and clear an exposition of the utter unsuitability of the Church to the age in which we live should do much for those who still regard that institution as useful. It would be hard even for an opponent of Christianity, confining himself to purely mundane grounds, to present a more convincing picture. Nor does the author shrink from the most sweeping reform. He would have the Church disestablished and at least partially disendowed, subscription to the Articles and the use of the Prayer Book done away with in order to encourage union with Dissenters, the incomes of Bishops curtailed, the monstrosous monotony of the Anglican service broken, and so forth. But, while giving full credit to what under the circumstances is an extraordinary achievement of impartiality, we should not forget that even reforms such as these are merely a tinkering of old pots, and that, supposing them practicable, it would probably not be in the interests of humanity to secure a new lease of life to the religious body. Fortunately however they are far less likely to be realized than are for instance Mr. Lawrence's proposals for the regulation of the growth of cities or those of Messrs. Buxton and Hoare for the reform of the Liquor Laws. Except in the not very probable event of a recrudescence of violent religious feeling the matter can only be considered as pressing on the economic ground of waste, the existence of the Church meaning the loss to the nation of a certain quantity of intellect and a far greater quantity of money which might have been turned to profitable account. None but a few extremists will ignore this aspect of the evil by which it is differentiated from, for example, the drink question.

With the main moral of Mr. G. P. Gooch's essay on *Imperialism*, that it is wrong for the nation to pursue power and bulk at the expense of goodness, it is impossible not to agree, although exception may be taken to some of his applications of the principle.

The book closes with a short paper by Mr. G. M. Trevelyan on *Past and Future*, which is simply a stirring appeal for more



effort on the part of individuals in the common cause, in order that through artifice the way may be found back to Nature from the evil conditions of modern life. When it has been observed that the device of printing sentences like "the Conservative Party is the Evil" in capital letters (p. 414) is calculated to alienate rather than inspire, nothing remains but praise for one who wears the mantle of Carlyle and Ruskin worthily.

Apart from the higher note struck by Mr. Trevelyan the permanent value of the book lies entirely in its practical parts. It would be hard to find work better done than the accounts of schools, of the drink question, of the inadequacy of the Church, of the South African question, and the proposals for reform in each case. With reference to Mr. Lawrence's treatment of the housing problem the opinion of the Chairman of the Housing Committee of the London County Council may be quoted, who writes, "It is about the best paper on the subject I have read. I have the book constantly by me for reference."

The misfortune of the authors is that at the same time they have not shrunk from raising, without making any original or valuable contribution thereto, a number of important theoretical questions which it would require an Aristotle to coördinate. Among these may be mentioned the question of *laissez faire* as opposed to "socialistic" or "paternalistic" legislation, skimmed by Messrs. Buxton and Hoare; international morality, most inadequately discussed by Mr. Gooch; and the nature of the obligation for individual effort towards the common good, which Mr. Trevelyan takes for granted. But the subject which has received the fullest and the least satisfactory treatment is that of religion. It is too easily assumed that religious instruction is the best way of inculcating morality. Mr. Masterman looks to a regenerated Church for the solution of social problems, and can not really get away from the idea that the Church, as such, has certain "claims and calls." Mr. Bray thinks that religion is necessary for morality and has fallaciously implied that it is necessary for intellect. Mr. Head also thinks that the Church has a future.

In a way the criticism which it arouses is the measure of a book's value; and this is especially true of the observation which "The Heart of the Empire" finally suggests—that the work is incomplete and that a sequel is necessary. No criticism of the defects of our national life can be really effective which does not grapple with the problems, no less involved and distressing than

those of the poor, presented by the wealthy and aristocratic classes. We look forward to this necessary supplement of a work so well begun.

S. P. WATERLOW.

LONDON.

CHAPTERS FROM ARISTOTLE'S ETHICS. By J. H. Muirhead, M. A.  
Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy, Mason University  
College, Birmingham. London: John Murray, Albemarle  
Street, 1900. (Pp. ix., 316).

To bring the main ideas of Aristotle's Ethics before English readers, and in so doing to treat that great work as a living contribution to philosophy, still affording invaluable guidance, still deserving the most serious criticism, is a task worthy of all praise, and Professor Muirhead has performed it in a way to earn the thanks of many. Throughout he tests the views of Aristotle in the light of modern thought and modern problems, and his method, at once respectful and alert in criticism, prevents the Greek from ever growing dead in his hands. In view of the needs of the general reader the language has been kept singularly free from the jargon of the schools.

The book consists of two parts: the first a discussion of what are taken to be the salient points in Aristotle's conception, the second, a series of passages translated from the Nicomachean Ethics, selected and arranged so as to emphasize Professor Muirhead's own interpretation. There are obvious dangers, of course, in such a treatise on such a subject, and it may be hoped it is not churlish to say that Professor Muirhead has not escaped them all. Perhaps the difficulty of his task was increased by its origin, the preparation of a course of lectures to teachers of which these "chapters" were the foundation. It is this which accounts for the absence of "all reference to Aristotle's famous treatment of Justice in the fifth book, which falls rather to the side of politics than education," (Preface, p. viii). Still it is impossible not to regret the disturbance in proportion due to the omission. One may regret even more the absence of chaps. i-v in Book III. with treatment of moral purpose and the difference between voluntary and involuntary action, but it may be that Professor Muirhead was wise to avoid such ground in a book of this scope. It is harder to see why he should have left out the con-